



REDWOOD EMPIRE COMPOSITE SQUADRON 157

2243 Airport Blvd.
Santa Rosa CA 95403-8259

Phone/fax
(707) 545-7488

PRESS RELEASE 04 JANUARY 2006 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Members of Santa Rosa's Redwood Empire Composite Sq. 157 were among those manning the Sonoma County Emergency Operations Center in response to severe flooding along the Russian River over the New Year's holiday.

As massive rainstorms moved into Northern California on 31 December, the Russian River at Guerneville rose to a peak of 41.65' (or almost 10 feet above its 32' flood level) just after the New Year struck at midnight on 31 December/01 January. The town of Guerneville was inundated, with damage also occurring to nearby Rio Nido and Monte Rio, all popular resort areas since the early 20th century.

With a local declaration of emergency, the Sonoma County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated at 0600 on 31 December. The EOC coordinates local government response to disasters, plans recovery operations, and operates a press information center. The EOC was staffed by representatives of 7 Sonoma County departments: Sheriff, Emergency Services, Human Services, Public Health, Environmental Health, Transportation & Public Works and Permit & Resource Management. Others staffing the EOC included California Highway Patrol and Office of Emergency Services, and the Red Cross.

As evacuations were being performed by the California National Guard 579 Engineers BN, Sonoma County Sheriff (including its helicopter "Henry 1") and local fire departments, EOC staff monitored weather reports and activated evacuation centers at Analy High School in Sebastopol and the Sonoma County Fairgrounds in Santa Rosa. At the peak of the storms, over 2,000 PG&E customers were without power; preliminary property damage estimate is \$57 million. No lives were reported lost during the flooding.

The EOC is a state of the art facility located in the Hall of Justice complex. Members of CAP Squadron 157 were tasked with facility security, guarding the (normally unmarked) access point, signing workers in and out, and escorting members of the press to the press information office. Seven senior members and 3 cadets provided security for the EOC around the clock from 31 December through 02 January, under the coordination of squadron emergency services officer 1LT Don Olsen; C/CAPT Zachary Hamill, who was working at the EOC as an employee of California OES, was liaison officer.

Sonoma County is among 17 counties declared disaster areas by the governor; a presidential declaration of a federal disaster area has been requested and is pending.

#####

Prepared by: 1Lt David J Reber CAP – Public Affairs Officer
18200 Robin Ave., Sonoma CA 95476
office 707-996-2833 home 707-938-3760 e-mail djreber@aol.com

Distribution: *Eagle Call*